

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Nixon Enemy List Reveals Paranoia

By Jack Anderson

Getting on the White House enemy list has become the latest status symbol in Washington. I would have been disappointed if I hadn't made the list of top 20 enemies.

Rival politicians like Senators Ed Muskie and George McGovern used to be called opponents, not enemies. Celebrities like Gregory Peck and Bill Cosby, who have criticized President Nixon, used to be called critics not enemies.

Now the White House lists them as "enemies" to be harassed through government investigations. Few private individuals can stand up against the awesome power of the federal government. No private bank account can match the bottomless vaults of the U.S. Treasury. No private staff can marshal the manpower available to the government.

Yet the White House according to the memos flushed out by the Senate Watergate investigation, was determined to use this government power to "get" or "screw" political opponents.

I became aware months ago that the White House was seeking to discredit and, if possible, to destroy me. I decided finally that the best defense was to lay out the facts in the open. "The word has gone out from the White House," I wrote on February 7, "to 'nail' Jack Anderson."

I named staff chief H. R.

Haldeman as the White House official behind the move. I described Haldeman's "cold, calculated hostility towards the press," and quoted a White House source as saying Haldeman "has an absolutely evil attitude relative to the press."

More specifically, I wrote that, "the word was passed to the Justice Department to try to make a case against us." This led to the abortive arrest of my associate Les Whitten. A federal grand jury, however, refused to indict him, and the Justice Department was forced to drop the charges.

White House press spokesman Ron Ziegler, with an unusual show of emotion, described as "wrong! wrong! wrong!" my charge that Haldeman was trying to nail us. Now the enemy lists and ugly memos out of the White House portray the true attitude of the men formerly around President Nixon.

It is also worth examining how I wound up on the White House enemy list. A review of my columns shows I wrote dozens of favorable stories about President Nixon. I reported, for example, that he had evidence the Democrats had stuffed the ballot boxes in Illinois, Missouri, and Texas in the 1960 election. Yet he turned down partisan appeals that he use the evidence to overturn the election results,

saying, "I damn well will not be a party to creating (a constitutional crisis) just to become President."

I told how he had paid all the college expenses of two black students without their knowledge, how as a college student himself he had waited each evening for a crippled classmate to help him up the stairs of their boarding house.

From sources who had gone to the Moscow summit meeting with Mr. Nixon, I wrote how he had broken the impasse over disarmament by leaning forward and telling Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev bluntly: "Dammit, let's settle it."

What landed me on the enemy list, apparently, was my access to unauthorized information embarrassing to the Nixon administration. In early 1971, the White House analyzed my columns carefully for three months.

A confidential report to Haldeman acknowledged: "Anderson does, indeed, have access to intelligence digests, and he proves it on a daily basis. It also appears his reference to private Presidential memoranda is valid, but most likely when such material leaves the White House and is circulated on an agency level."

"On more than one occasion, examination of a Presidential quote in context indicates strongly that the leak came

not from within the White House, but from the agency concerned with the subject matter.

"Anderson's comment regarding 'some of the transcripts of confidential minutes' possibly refers to verbatim quotes of comments made at White House leadership meetings..."

It was suggested that, "an overt firing of a person directly connected with a leak would go a long way towards making the ability of the Andersons of the world to gain White House information both difficult and hazardous."

The White House was unable, however, to find my sources. Instead, I wrote even more embarrassing stories about how President Nixon had lied to the public about the India-Pakistan conflict. Then I published the Dita Beard memorandum, which linked a \$400,000 offer from International Telephone and Telegraph with the settlement of its antitrust troubles.

These were the crimes, apparently, which made me an enemy of the White House. Almost every public figure who criticized the President wound up on the enemy list.

But the existence of the enemy list is revealing, most of all, about the people in the White House. It shows they were suffering from a pathological paranoia.

© 1973, United Feature Syndicate